GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3950
ANSWERED ON:27.03.2017
Heavy School Bags
Mishra Shri Anoop;Verma Shri Rajesh

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Academy of Paediatrics has suggested that children should not carry school bags weighing more than ten per cent of their body weight to avoid long term health problems and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Government is aware that the students of both Government and private schools in the country have to carry heavy bags to the schools; and

(c) if so, the details of the steps taken/ proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(SHRI UPENDRA KUSHWAHA)

(a) & (b) Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has informed that the studies published in the Journal of Indian Pediatrics showed that 12 to 34% of school children are suffering from low back pain and this may be attributed to carrying of heavy school bags.

(c) The Central Government has taken various steps to reduce curriculum load and the weight of school bags. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has not recommended any textbook for early childhood education. It has recommended only two books (Language and Mathematics) for classes I & II and three books for Classes III to V (Language, Environmental Studies and Mathematics). The number and size of NCERT's textbooks used by the primary and secondary school students are appropriate to their age. NCERT has also made available all their textbooks for free access through the web (epathshala.nic.in) and mobile devices. The collections include textbooks for all subjects across all the stages and made available for free download and dissemination. Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has directed schools affiliated to it to ensure that students do not carry school bags till Class II and also to restrict the number of books to be prescribed in Classes I-VIII. In its latest circular dated 12th September, 2016, it has advised all its affiliated schools to take all possible measures to keep the weight of school bag under control.